



THE NATURE OF VOLUNTEERING

Vol 1. No. 17

EXPLORE THE WONDERS OF NATURE - VOLUNTEER

Fall 2003



From the time man first noticed the seasonal movement of animals, migration has fascinated and baffled people around the globe.

DO YOU KNOW -

- About 520 of the 650 bird species that nest in the United States migrate south to spend the winter.
- To prepare for migration, some birds store a special, high-energy fat before the trip. Soaring raptors, for example, may not eat for several weeks as they migrate. Other species eat along their migration routes.
- Arctic terns can migrate as far as 20,000 miles per year, from the Arctic to the Antarctic and back - the record for the longest migration on the planet!
- Some geese and ducks fly at incredible heights. Bar-headed geese have been recorded as high as 29,000 feet when they migrate over the Himalayas! That's five miles above our heads, even higher than Mount Everest!
- In still air, most songbirds fly at 20 to 30 mph. Waterfowl and shorebirds can fly at 30 to 50 mph. A tailwind allows the bird to fly faster.

source: Zoological Society of Milwaukee
www.zoosociety.org/education



AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGES ...

Wild Things

*where wildlife
comes naturally!*

Message from the Director

Migratory Birds: A Federal Trust Resource

The seasonal ebb and flow of migratory birds has fascinated humans for centuries. Twice each year these animals embark on short and long-distance journeys between their breeding areas and wintering grounds. Many people are familiar with the spectacular travels of the Arctic Tern that each year makes its round-trip flight from Alaska to Antarctica and back. The conservation and management of creatures capable of such impressive movements depends on strong Federal leadership to foster effective partnerships among the peoples of the many nations, states, provinces, and organizations linked together by the flight paths of these remarkable species.



Birds for People

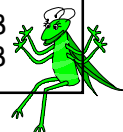
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has the legal mandate and the trust responsibility to maintain healthy migratory bird populations for the continued enjoyment of the American public. The Service is authorized by more than 25 primary conventions, treaties, and laws to ensure the wise use and management of more than 800 species of migratory birds and their habitats. Because migratory birds occur in virtually all landscapes, the Service enlists the help of many partners to meet its mandates.

Migratory birds symbolize America's wildlife experience because of their ubiquitous and conspicuous presence. Birds enrich human lives in innumerable ways and the loss of bird populations would diminish the quality of life for a large segment of the American public. Nearly 82 million residents of the United States pursue bird-related recreation such as bird-watching, feeding, hunting, and photography contributing nearly \$40 billion annually to the economy. These citizens have every expectation that their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren will be able to enjoy first-hand experiences with birds in their natural habitats.

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Forsythe NWR Will Monitor Rails

by Jorge L. Coppen

Conservation of migratory birds is a primary purpose of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Marsh and wading bird species include species of regional and national management concern. Because of their secretive nature, it can be difficult to monitor some species. Some of these species are U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service species of management concern because they are thought to be rare or declining.

In April 1998, marsh and wading bird experts gathered for a Marsh Bird Monitoring Workshop in Laurel, Maryland. One of the results of this workshop was the development of recommendations for a callback survey protocol. This Marshbird Callback Survey procedure is based upon the workshop recommendations and a callback method used by Gibbs and Melvin. Gibbs and Melvin, found that detectability improved for some marshbird species by greater than 90% with the aid of broadcast taped calls.

Baseline information about the occurrence of wetland-dependent species on refuges is necessary for the planning and evaluation of management activities. The primary objective of this plan is to provide baseline data about marsh and wading birds that occur on national wildlife refuges. The data will be used to determine species presence, abundance and distribution, and will aid in monitoring wetland habitat changes over time. This information will be used to monitor changes in the relative abundance of marsh and wading birds on the refuge, predict changes in marsh and wading bird communities resulting from habitat modification, evaluate marsh and wading bird responses, and evaluate the role of the refuge in the regional and national conservation of marsh and wading bird species.

Interestingly, one of the establishing purposes of the Forsythe NWR was "...to provide nesting habitats for rails"...yet rails have never been monitored by a formal survey effort on the refuge.

Call-Response surveys provide an index to population size and are used because it is often impossible to count every individual in an area. Indices estimate how many animals might be present based on the number of animals that are heard.

The Marshbird Callback Survey involves visiting several established points through wetland habitat during the early morning hours, and recording all the target avian species heard during fixed time periods of silence and broadcastings of selected species calls at each point. The procedure outlined is designed to maximize the number of individuals detected.

This survey is targeted towards inconspicuous marshbird species that are difficult to detect, not well surveyed by existing monitoring programs, and inhabit areas that are often not readily accessible. Since 80% of Forsythe NWR is salt marsh, the primary species of interest for this survey are black and clapper rails.

Management actions for marsh and wading bird species will be based on the refuge's objectives for this group of birds. Collection of baseline data in the pilot year will be required to develop specific station objectives. Data collected in subse-

quent years will be evaluated on an on-going basis, and revisions will be made as necessary.

Thresholds for management will differ depending on the species. For instance, a refuge may have a management objective to maintain a defined population level of Virginia rails for a particular wetland. The management action threshold may be: If the frequency of occurrence for Virginia rails in a wetland area falls below 30%, and the cattail component of the wetland is greater than 40%, the refuge will set back succession by prescribed burning to provide the habitat required to maintain/increase the breeding population of Virginia rails.



Clapper Rail

Photo by Gregory Kearns

New Customer Service Center

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has opened a new Customer Service Center.

1-800-344-WILD



UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, September 19 - 6 pm

Our very own T.R. Bear joins with the other beauties to participate in the annual Miss America Parade on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. *Will he show his shoes?*

Saturday, October 25 - 10 am to 3 pm

Refuge Day and Make a Difference Day celebrations at E.B. Forsythe NWR. This year's theme is Saving Space for Wildlife. We'll be *making a difference* in our native plant garden.

Brigantine Impoundments (and sections of Barnegat) Spraying and Burning — As much Phrag as possible! - this fall (spray) and winter (burn).

On August 1, 2003, Forsythe Refuge held a volunteer recognition dinner in honor of our deserving volunteers. During 2002, 112 volunteers, contributed over 5,600 hours of their time at the refuge. With the addition of our interns and other projects such as the tree planting on Make a Difference Day, over 7,000 hours were provided to Forsythe Refuge in 2002.

The pot-luck dinner was held at the Chestnut Neck Resort. Following the delicious dinner, awards were presented to our volunteers by Refuge Manager Steve Atzert, Deputy Project Leader Deb Long, Biologists Vinny Turner and Jorge Coppen, and Volunteer Coordinator Sandy Perchetti.



The highlight of the evening was the award to the 2002 Volunteer of the Year, Sue Tebbs and a gold CD plaque to the Friends of Forsythe for their support of

the National Wildlife Refuge Centennial and a major centennial project, "Songs of the System."

Interns Becky Smith, Lars Higdon, Kate Bollie, Chris Gruber and Tony Geiger received awards for their hard work and dedication to their assigned projects.

In addition to their awards from the Refuge staff, Congressional Certificates from Congressman Frank LoBiondo were presented to volunteers Doug Kellner as the 2002 Most Reliable Volunteer, Ed Jones for his role in the Refuge's first - and very successful - fishing derby, Al Reichenbach for the Most Dedicated volunteer, Sue Tebbs for Volunteer of the Year and Ed Bristow for the Friends of Forsythe and their outstanding contributions to the NWRs centennial.

Rich Koterba, one of our newer volunteers, received a framed peregrine picture for his help with this year's peregrine watch.

Three of the refuge's long-term partners, Atlantic Audubon, MotoPhoto of Northfield and Boscov's Inc. were acknowledged for their dedication and community support. Al Martens, Atlantic Audubon President and Kathy Varallo from Boscov's were presented with certificates of appreciation.

Cindy Heffley, Al Martens, Art Blatt & Penny Klein,

John Layton, Mike O'Brien and Bill Schiffer each received certificates for their work on the purple martin, bluebird, and wood duck monitoring projects.

Special thanks were given to our wildlife garden volunteers Evonne Kaminski, Judy Ryan-Heitz, Jeannette Treich, Beverly Albertson, Kris Arcuri, Jeanette McSorley, and Sue Tebbs who were presented with Centennial travel mugs during a luncheon the previous week.

After the award presentations, the volunteers and their guests quickly realized it was audience participation time for Forsythe's version of the Game Show Network. Volunteers were invited to "come on down" to be participants in our versions of "Beat the Clock," "Family Feud," "The Price is Right," and "The Weakest Link." By correctly answering questions about the Refuge system, and refuge staff and volunteers, they won donated prizes and seemed to be having a fun time with it all!

A world of thanks to those organizations who have supported the Refuge's activities throughout the year. They include Seafarer, Blue Heron Pines Golf Club, English Creek Supply, Shore Chiropractic Center, Calidini's Fine Wines Liquor and Deli, Brother's Pizza, Hamilton Mall, Trump TAJ Mahal, CJs Emporium, Atlantic City Surf, Walmart, The Gutter Guys, Artful Accents', The Noyes Museum, The Great American Trolley Company, Chestnut Neck Boat Yard, Absecon Bay Sportsmen Center, Up The Creek Marina, and Dick's Sporting Goods.

The evening ended with every volunteer leaving with a door prize and commemorative wine glass. For those of you who couldn't join us this year, we hope you'll be able to attend next year's dinner - we missed you!



Forsythe "Family Feud" - Brigantine vs Barnegat Interns



Al receives a life-time supply of insect repellent & first-aid supplies



The Challenges of Today

Compared to a century ago, society faces a more complex set of environmental problems. Habitat loss and degradation from a burgeoning human population and direct mortality attributable to a host of factors are the defining challenges of migratory bird conservation in the 21st century. Despite successes of the past, the Service is challenged to meet the expectations of growing constituencies who often have conflicting needs and differing values and priorities for the conservation and management of migratory birds and their habitats.

Meeting the Challenges through Science and Partnerships

To meet the increasing environmental challenges and on-going expectations of the American people for effective migratory bird conservation, the Service, in collaboration with its partners, is developing a strategic plan to realize the following vision:

Migratory bird populations and their habitats are effectively conserved and managed, through sound science and with diverse partnerships, at levels that recognize their ecological significance and provide continued opportunities for human use and enjoyment.

The success of the Service and its partners in achieving this vision depends upon acquiring and applying scientific information as the foundation for the conservation and management of migratory bird populations. It also depends upon the ability of the Service to form lasting local, state, regional, national and international partnerships that are both transparent and collaborative.

We Need Your Help

The purpose of the strategic plan is to set a course for the Migratory Bird Program over the next decade. The Service is seeking the counsel and wisdom of all its employees and partners to develop this strategic direction and to work toward the vision of effective, comprehensive bird conservation.

We need your help to set the best possible future course for the Service's Migratory Bird Program. So, please participate in this consultation by sending us your comments. Your input is important to us!

Steve Williams
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

To download a pdf file of the strategic plan entitled *A Blueprint for the Future of Migratory Birds*, go to <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/mbstratplan/mbstratplan.pdf>. Instructions for submitting comments can be found at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/mbstratplan/mbstratplan.htm>.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES - Bring a Friend

Wildflower Garden	___	Environmental Education	___	
Visitor Center Talks	___	Trail Maintenance	___	Special Events
Photo Club	___	Friends of Forsythe	___	Clean Up Litter
Puppeteers	___	Help with census of plant or animal populations	___	Lead bus tours on Wildlife Drive

If you're interested in volunteering for any of these projects, have other ideas, or would like to contribute goods or services to help with these projects, please let us know by completing this form and sending it to us:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Edwin B. Forsythe NWR
Box 72, Great Creek Road
Oceanville, NJ 08231
609-748-1535



RICH KOTERBA



What does a Battalion Fire Chief do when he retires? If you're as lucky as Forsythe Refuge, he decides to become a volunteer.

Rich and his wife Joan, recently moved to Four Seasons (Smithville) from Passaic, NJ. A very community-minded couple (59 years of combined service), Rich watched over the safety of the town while Joan performed her duties as Deputy City Clerk.

Rich proudly boasts of his granddaughter, Nicole, who is a rising soccer star in her North Jersey home town.

Once settled in their new home, it wasn't long before Rich started coming to Forsythe Refuge, and in March of this year, he joined our volunteer team. Rich has certainly been an asset to the Refuge handling a multitude of tasks from monitoring the Peregrines, to water and air sampling, to cutting trails, to helping with the waterfowl surveys.

Rich says he's definitely an outdoor person - having hiked the state forests and fished rivers and oceans.

There's plenty of outdoors around here to keep you busy for quite a while, Rich. Thanks for volunteering.

Farewell Friends of Forsythe,

In October, Jeanne and I will be moving to Stillwater NWR in Fallon, Nevada. Although I am very happy to be returning to the west, I will miss the people I have had the opportunity to get to know and work with at Forsythe. During the three short years I have worked at the Barnegat Division, I have had the opportunity to work with several members of the Friends Group. I must say it has been an honor and a pleasure to have worked with one of the Refuge System's premiere Friends Groups and some of the best and most dedicated volunteers with the Fish and Wildlife Service. Without a doubt you have made the Edwin B. Forsythe NWR a better place, for wildlife and people. Thank you for everything you do. It's been a wonderful experience.

Kevin DesRoberts
Refuge Manager, Barnegat Division

Summer 2003

by Vinny Turner

The piping plover season started out on somewhat shaky ground. The early portion of the nesting season was filled with days of unseasonably cool weather and rain. As a result, no plovers established nests for the month of April throughout the State, which is a first. When nesting finally did get going in May, it was a very slow start. Two interns assisted in the collection of plover data for both Little Beach and Holgate this season. Chris Gruber, a graduate from Stockton College, and Katie Bollie from Wheaton College in MA. On June 3 and 5, 2003, volunteers assisted in the walking survey for the population count of plovers on Holgate and Little Beach respectively. The population at the time for Holgate was 35 birds observed, while Little Beach had 33 birds. Due to the late start of the season, the total numbers were slightly lower than what would be expected. As the season progressed, attrition of nests came in the form of floods, predation, and abandonment. A trend that has been observed at Holgate is the decrease of plover pairs over the last few years. Biologist Turner attributes this to the loss of habitat. The encouraging news, however, is that pair numbers at Little Beach continue to increase. A total of 13 nests from 13 pairs at Holgate were found with only 10 of those successfully hatching. Little Beach had 22 nests from 19 pairs with only 10 hatching as well. With good observational coverage at both locations, Holgate successfully fledged 17 chicks for a productivity of 1.30 chicks per nesting pair, while Little Beach produced 22 fledged chicks for a productivity of 1.15 chicks per nesting pair. This is the first time that both locations had over 1.00 productivity since 2000. With plans for habitat manipulation on Holgate (thinning of vegetation in nesting areas) during the winter, it is expected that pair numbers for Holgate will increase.

An added bonus to Holgate's season was the success of black skimmer nesting. Over 150 nests were counted within the colony and when a walking survey was conducted to count the total number of chicks on August 27, about 200 skimmer chicks in various stages of development were observed. This is very encouraging. Black skimmer nesting populations have been on a steady increase at Holgate for the last three years. There may come a day, hopefully, that the nesting populations of over 700 nests back in the 1980's can be attained again. Least terns nesting, however, continues to be poor at best. To this day, the reason for their drastic decline from their tremendous numbers in the late 1980's (1,200 nesting pairs) continues to baffle refuge staff.

Even with the slow start, the year was rather successful, with the refuge being one of the top sites throughout the State. Without the help of the interns and volunteers, much of this would not be possible. The season was a good one. Here's to a more productive one for 2004.



At Forsythe, one of our goals is that our interns have the opportunity to understand and participate in the conservation and public enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources. This includes providing them with experience and exposure in the fields of fish and wildlife biology, educational outreach, and natural resources management. The following two articles were written by two of this year's outstanding volunteers.

In our last newsletter, we introduced you to this year's crop of interns. Well, it's been a full few months for Becky, Chris, Kate, Lars, and Tony working together as a team on many diverse and exciting projects. Each one has brought special talents to share with us and we hope we met their expectations. We're extremely proud of the work they've accomplished. It's been a pleasure working with such a great bunch of interns these past few months and we'll definitely miss them all.



While arriving in New Jersey for the first time, I was immediately shocked by the scenic beauty of this state. Despite the congestion of the Philadelphia region, I experienced nothing but a landscape of solid woodlands during my train ride out toward the coast. Today, it is even rare for my sparsely populated homeland of the Midwest to boast of such a pristine landscape which still dominates much of New Jersey. Since arriving at the refuge, I have been fascinated and amazed by the diversity and abundance of life in the area. I look forward to enjoying a full summer getting to know this refuge and the east coast much more.

This summer marks the end of my third year as a student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. I am currently majoring in natural resource management with a minor in conservation biology. In exactly one year I will be completely finished with my undergraduate education and will be faced with the decision of what to do next. At this point I am planning to find more experience in the conservation field before deciding upon a specific degree in graduate school. Eventually, I would like to work for a non-profit organization such as the The Nature Conservancy or the World Wildlife Fund. No matter where I end up working though, I will constantly be striving to help pre-

serve and protect the ecological integrity of the world for the benefit of all living organisms on this planet.

When not studying or working, I spend much of my time fly-fishing for trout in a hidden stream deep within the forest. I also enjoy backpacking and camping in any wild area I can find. I have many wonderful memories of exploring some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world while camping next to a river and eating a dinner of fresh fish. When ever I get the chance, I try and continue to travel the world to discover what else there is to find.



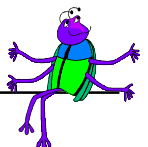
During this summer at the Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge I hope to gain many skills to aid me throughout my career. Principally, I will be working on the salt marsh acreage of the reserve researching the impacts of Open Marsh Water Management on the surrounding marsh. My main tasks as a summer intern will include bird surveys, mosquito samples, water level and salinity inventories, and fish and invertebrate samples. During the course of my internship I hope to become more familiar with research techniques and field study procedures. I am also looking forward to learning more about the coastal birds on the reserve which make this area so unique. Lastly, I am hoping to meet many wonderful people who can guide me in the conservation field and help me find my role as an aspiring ecologist. It will be a summer of hard work, fun, and experience and a summer I will never forget.



I'm originally from Absecon, NJ, but now live in Ocean City. I attended The Richard Stockton College of NJ for environmental science and just graduated this spring. After my internship here at Forsythe NWR, I plan to hike the Appalachian Trail and then go back to graduate school for entomology (hopefully at the University of Massachusetts at Amhurst).

I've always had a deep respect for nature since my father, being of Native American descent and a marine biologist, taught me about its importance. As I grew older though, I realized that sadly, not all people view the world like us. I've seen so much land in south Jersey destroyed just to build developments for people that cannot live without summer homes at the shore or golf courses. So, when I was a senior in high school, I knew that I wanted to devote my life to this cause.

I love animals but insects are my passion followed by reptiles. My entomology professor at Stockton really inspired me to learn everything there is to know about insects and get into the field. They are very important members of an ecosystem and many people don't realize this. I think they're so cool because there are so many

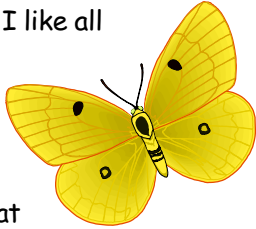


Becky - continued from page 6

and they can fill any niche. Every time I am outside in the forest, all I have to do is focus on one plant and I usually see many insects. They have many strange behaviors as well, so they are fun to learn about. Also, they are always number one in the most extreme countdown on Animal Planet. I like all insects, but moths and beetles are my favorite.

I've been a volunteer here at the refuge since September of 2002 working mostly on Open Marsh Water Management (OMWM). Some of my duties include well sampling, nekton surveys, bird surveys, and mosquito larva sampling. I've also worked on NADP and IMPROVE with Doug, water parameters around wildlife drive, Atlantic Brant survey with Nacote Creek, and I'm currently working on removing invasive plant species (like Wisteria and Autumn Olive) from the refuge.

I started volunteering here to get credit for a senior project which was required by my college in order to graduate. I liked working here a lot because I love being outside and everyone I've worked with so far has been really nice. I decided to stay and work during the summer and maybe even longer. I think OMWM is a great study because it focuses on controlling mosquito populations that are abundant in the salt marsh without the use of pesticides that may harm other organisms. I hope it will give me some experience with handling insect pests in the future.



NEW REFUGE OFFICER TO BARNEGAT DIVISION

Chris Pancila was hired this past February as the new Refuge Officer at the Barnegat Division of the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. Many of you might remember Chris from his work as a seasonal Officer at the Holgate Unit of the Refuge. Chris started training for his new position in March, returning from FLETC (Federal Law Enforcement Training Center) in Georgia at the end of June and is currently working through the Service's field training program.

Chris returned to his native home of New Jersey two years ago from four years of living and working out West, where he served terms with the U.S. Forest Service in Arizona and The State Park Service in Oregon. Chris has also worked with the National Park Service in Northern California-Redwood National Park, Nevada-Lake Mead National Recreation Area and New Jersey-Sandy Hook National Recreation Area. Chris' educational background is from Unity College in Maine, where he received a B.S. degree in Park Management.

Chris has many hobbies, including bike riding (road and mountain), surf casting, weight lifting and running, but above all of these is a passion for the sport of surfing. Over the past years this passion has led to trips to Puerto Rico, Australia, New Zealand and most recently Hawaii. So, whenever the waves are up, Chris is sure to be on them.

Chris is looking forward to his new responsibilities at the refuge and hopes to work more closely with Forsythe's valuable volunteers.



FRIENDS STORE TO REOPEN

There was no snoozin' this summer for our Dr. B. -- he was busy shopping around for additions to the store (and when we say additions ... we mean ADDITIONS). An entire new section will be added to the existing structure, which will double the size of the shop. With weather permitting, and the help of our fantastic volunteers, the new section should be complete by the end of September; but don't wait 'til then to stop by the store, which is open every weekend through December.

This year the shop will feature a special, limited edition t-shirt featuring John Matteoni's winning photo from the Friends of Forsythe's first photo contest.

Look for some big changes once the Friends Nature Store reopens on September 6th.

Dr. Bristow plans to add a new t-shirt each year featuring the winning photo from the most recent Friends/Stay Focused Photo Club contest.

New Audubon "singing birds" will also be added to the store's inventory - and DON'T FORGET --

**THE
WINTER
HOLIDAYS
ARE JUST AROUND
THE CORNER !**

*... so if you're looking
for a unique gift?*

Songs of the System CD
Cost: \$15.00

Available at the Friends of
Forsythe Nature Store
Hours Sat & Sun 10 to 4
through December
or call 748-1535
to place an order.

CHECK IT OUT!

Access this newsletter
at <http://forsythe.fws.gov>

TEAMWORK & EGO - A FABLE



A frog asked two geese to take him south with them. At first they resisted; they didn't see how it could be done. Finally the frog suggested that the two geese hold a stick in their beaks and that he would hold on to it with his mouth.

So off the unlikely threesome went, flying southward over the countryside. It was really quite a sight. People looked up and expressed great admiration at this demonstration of creative teamwork.

Someone said, "It's wonderful! Who was so clever to discover such a fine way to travel?"

Whereupon, the frog opened his mouth and said, "It was I," as it plummeted to the earth.

The moral: Self-conceit can lead to self-destruction.



WHO'S ON STAFF?

Project Leader
STEVE ATZERT

Deputy Project Leader
DEBORAH LONG

Refuge Manager
Barnegat Division
KEVIN DESROBERTS

Biologists
JORGE COPPEN, VINNY TURNER

Refuge Law Enforcement Officers
BRIAN WILLARD, CHRIS PANCILA

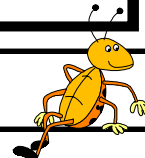
Administrative
Officer
MARTHA HAND

Office
Automation Assistant
CINDY HEFFLEY

Volunteer Coordinator
SANDY PERCHETTI

Outdoor Recreation Planner
VACANT

Maintenance Professionals
TOM HOLDSWORTH
TERRY MITCHELL



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